



PM Modi on Three-Nation Tour

The Indian Prime Minister is on a 5-day visit to Rwanda, Uganda and South Africa. The visit to the three-nations is meant to further strengthen India's relations with the African continent.

Key Highlights of PM's Visit to Rwanda [//](#)

- The visit to Rwanda will mark the first ever visit to the African nation by an Indian Prime Minister.
- India is set to establish an Indian high commission in Rwanda to enhance better communication between the respective governments and to enable facilities for consular, passport, visa and others.
- India will gift 200 cows as a part of Rwandan President Kagame's flagship **Girinka program**, in which the poorest get cows from the government and gift the first female calf to a neighbor to promote brotherhood.
- India also extended \$100 million for development of industrial parks and Kigali special economic zone (SEZ) in Rwanda and another \$100 million for agriculture.

Why is Rwanda Important?

- The Prime Minister's visit to Rwanda is historic as Rwanda is an important gateway to Eastern Africa. India had elevated its bilateral relations with Rwanda to the level of a strategic partnership.
- Rwanda has left behind memories of a horrific genocide in 1994 which saw majority ethnic group of Hutus target the minority Tutsis, leaving hundreds of thousands dead.
- However, since 2000, Rwanda has attained a growth rate of 8% a year, making it one of the fastest-growing economies in the world (though still one of the poorest).
- Rwanda is also increasingly playing an important role in African affairs. The Rwandan President is the current Chair of the African Union. In March, Kigali (Capital of Rwanda) hosted the Assembly of the African Union where the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area was signed.
- Rwanda is the third largest troop contributor for peacekeeping in Africa and plays an important role in the UN Mission in the Central African Republic.

- Despite the ramping up of high-level visits, various studies and statistics show that Indian interest in the Africa growth story has not kept pace, and even declined through most of the period.
- According to the **“World Investment Report for 2018”, issued by UNCTAD**, Indian FDI in Africa in 2016-17 was at \$14 billion while China has increased its investment levels to a massive \$40 billion in 2016-17.
- Hence, India has to encounter increasing challenges of Chinese competition as well as declining Indian trade and investment figures.

India-Rwanda Relations

- In 1999, Rwanda officially opened its Mission in New Delhi. There are approximately 3000 Indian nationals and PIOs in Rwanda.
- India’s engagement with Rwanda is at three levels viz. at the African Union (AU) level, at level of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and at the bilateral level.
- India has consistently been one of the top import sources for Rwanda.

Key Highlights of PM’s Visit to Uganda

- It is the first bilateral tour by an Indian Prime Minister since 1997. Also, for the first time an Indian Prime Minister will address the Ugandan Parliament.
- India has announced two lines of credit worth nearly \$200 million in energy infrastructure, agriculture and daily sectors.
- India and Uganda signed four MoUs in the areas of defence cooperation, visa exemption for official and diplomatic passport holders, cultural exchange programme and material testing laboratory.
- India will assist Uganda in training, capacity building, infrastructure development, IT and development initiatives.
- As Uganda seeks assistance from India to improve healthcare facilities, India will provide a cancer therapy machine to the cancer institute in Kampala (capital of Uganda).
- India unveiled a bust of India's first home minister Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel at the Indian community event addressed in Kampala.

Importance of Uganda

- The visit marks the 25th high-level bilateral visit from India to Africa in just four years—underlining a significant build-up in India’s ties with the continent.
- India looks forward to expanding markets and promote Indian trade and investment in Eastern Africa for the mutual growth of India-Eastern Africa economies.
- Indian exports to Uganda narrowed to \$736 million at present from \$1.2 billion in 2015, while Ugandan shipments to the subcontinent increased to \$44 million from \$24 million during the same period.
- Uganda is currently chair of the East African community and the country has rich potential in resource base including its oil and gas sector, its agriculture, its minerals including rare earth minerals as well as renewable energy.
- Besides resources and markets, India also needs to closely watch China’s progress in building up constituencies around the world, including Africa.
- Support from such constituencies helps strengthen China’s international position and in the process, Chinese ambitions for global leadership get a boost.

India-Uganda Relations

- India established its diplomatic presence in 1965, even though the countries relationship dates back to the era when traders ferried goods in dhows across the Indian Ocean which eventually led to number of Indians to settle in East Africa, and many made Uganda their home.
- India’s freedom struggle inspired early Ugandan activists to fight colonialism and the country achieved freedom in 1962.
- In the 1970s under the dictatorship of Idi Amin, nearly 60000 Indians and PIOs were expelled from Uganda. However, this policy was reversed in the 80s and currently there are over 30000 Indians/PIOs in the country.

Key Highlights of PM's Visit to South Africa

- India and South Africa have signed three agreements on the sidelines of the 10th annual BRICS Summit that is taking place in Johannesburg.
- The agreements signed include a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the ISRO and the South African National Space Agency (SANSA) to promote cooperation in space exploration and a commitment to continue using space for peaceful purposes.
- India and South Africa will also set up a 'Gandhi Mandela Centre of Specialization for Artisan Skills'.
- The third MoU was signed between the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and the Pretoria-based Agricultural Research Council to improve cooperation in agricultural research and education.



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